# Council Member Mike Sullivan's Newsletter

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## Council Member Mike Sullivan



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Published by Lauren Doak

#### **Residents of District E,**

As I sit and write the opening for this month's newsletter, President Obama just announced that Osama Bin Laden has been killed. That is a tremendous victory for us in our fight against terrorism. It also makes me realize, more than ever, how much I appreciate our military men and women. A day doesn't go by that I do not try to recognize our soldiers in some way. Matter of fact, I have been working closely with the Houston Dynamo Soccer president Chris Canetti to do just that. On Friday, April 29th, we recognized Major Sgt. Craig Reuter of the Air Force who serves out of Ellington Field. On Wednesday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, we recognized Noncommissioned Officer, Staff Sergeant Maximo Nunez of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division. It is a true honor for me to nominate these men so they can be recognized on the field during halftime activities. You have no idea how much the Dynamo crowds appreciate these men. They are given a standing ovation, and the applause is thunderous. I want to personally thank Chris Canetti for letting me be a part of these ceremonies.

Houston city council will begin the budget approval process full speed in the next couple of weeks. Mayor Parker will present her budget to us, and we will be given an opportunity to offer amendments. I have always offered a number of amendments to the mayor's budget, all in an effort to *reduce spending*, *focus on core responsibilities* of city government and to *improve service* to constituents while doing so. This budget year will not be different. You can expect budget cutting amendments, not just because we are facing a budget deficit of \$150MM next year, but because it is the right thing to do.

The other important issue facing city council is redistricting. This process is conducted every 10 years, immediately after the federal census is conducted. The city engaged demographers, legal representation, academic institutions and other experts in proposing two new council districts, as well as balancing population throughout existing council districts. A series of public meetings were held throughout the city. Public hearings were also held at city council over the last three weeks. I am pleased to say that District E's configuration stays somewhat the same, with it only losing areas west of the Gulf Freeway (I-45). Other than that, there are no changes to the district. City council will vote on the proposed council districts in May, in time for the upcoming fall city elections. All council members, city controller and mayor will be on the November ballot this year.

Lastly, I want to thank my city council staff for the outstanding work they do. Even while taking involuntary furlough days, they continue to do their jobs and take care of my constituents. They are as committed to serving you as I am, and for that, I want to publicly thank them. I am blessed to have Monica, Karina, Lauren and Kelly here to help me do the job that needs to be done. They are the best.

Thank you for the privilege of serving you.

Mike Sullivan
Council Member

#### **Boy Scout Troop 1043 Meeting**

Boy Scout Troop 1043 asked Council Member Sullivan to speak at their meeting last month to help fulfill the boys' requirement to earn their civil merit badge. While speaking, Council Member Sullivan gave an overview about his role as an elected official, explained how the city government works and discussed different issues that are affecting the city at this time. He was honored to speak to the troop and thanks Buddy Warr for inviting him to help educate the boys and to help them earn their merit badge.

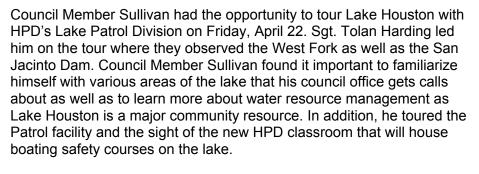


Council Member Sullivan with scouts from Troop 1043

#### **Lake Houston Patrol Tour**



Council Member Sullivan pictured with the Lake Houston HPD Patrol officers



Council Member Sullivan thanks Sgt. Harding, Lt. Albert Mihalco and Officer Brian Schroeder for taking him and his staff on the tour and for providing the valuable information his office can use for following up with future constituent cases.



Council Member Sullivan and Lt. Albert Mihalco

The Houston Police Department Marine Unit consists of the Dive Team and the Lake Patrol. Lake Patrol was formed in the late 1950's and is assigned to the Tactical Operations Division of the Police Department. It is the primary law enforcement agency for the 12,000 surface acres of water of Lake Houston. The unit consists of seven officers and one supervisor. The unit patrols on the water seven days a week and responds to emergencies on the water 24 hours a day. All officers assigned to Lake Patrol are trained and certified as Marine Safety Enforcement Officers as required by state law and as Boater Education Instructors. The primary mission of Lake Patrol is boating safety. This mission is accomplished through a variety of methods including enforcement, education, training and community outreach. The community is encouraged to contact the Lake Patrol with any boating questions, concerns regarding Lake Houston, fish and game questions or other lake related issues by calling 281-324-2250 or emailing tolan.harding@cityofhouston.net. Tours of the Lake Patrol facility as well as Boater Education classes can be arranged by contacting Sgt. T.W. Harding.

#### **Lake Houston TIRZ Board Meeting**



Council Member Sullivan swears in Philip Ivy and Stanley Sarman

As the district council member for the Lake Houston TIRZ board, Council Member Sullivan attended the monthly board meeting in April. During the meeting, two board members were sworn in. Stanley Sarman who was originally appointed by former Mayor Bill White was most recently sworn in as chairman of the board in April. In addition, Philip Ivy, who was nominated by Council Member Sullivan to serve, was sworn in after his appointment by the mayor and city council to serve position three as a TIRZ board member.

Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones (TIRZs) are special zones created by city council to attract new investment to an area. TIRZs help finance the cost of redevelopment and encourage development in an area that would otherwise not attract sufficient market development in a timely manner. Taxes attributable to new improvements (tax increments) are set-aside in a fund to finance public improvements within the boundaries of the zone.

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Dancing for Partners

The YMCA hosted their 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Dancing for Partners competition held on Thursday, April 28 the Humble Civic Center. Community leaders were paired with local dance instructors and performed a variety of different dance routines. Council Member Sullivan was honored to be the Master of Ceremonies again this year, which benefitted the YMCA Partners Scholarship Campaign.

Dancing for Partners is one of many events throughout the year benefitting the Partners Scholarship Campaign. The campaign has raised over \$185,000 which is used to help support children and families in the community who may not be able to afford the cost of YMCA programs. Other events include the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Tournament, 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Trunk or Treat, and the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Bridge Fest.



#### **Lake Houston Area Chamber of Commerce Meetings**

Council Member Sullivan attended the monthly Lake Houston Area Chamber of Commerce luncheon on Tuesday, April 19 at the Kingwood Country Club. The luncheon, presented by the Kingwood Medical Center, featured guest speaker Gabe Beltran from Skylla Engineering. Beltran, a local resident, spoke about founding and growing his business Skylla Engineering, which employees 192 professionals who support more than 30 different government and commercial customers worldwide.

The week before, Council Member Sullivan spoke to members of the Chamber's Governmental Affairs Committee during their monthly meeting on April 12. He gave a run down on things happening at City Hall. Issues discussed include redistricting, the new Kingwood Community Center that is to be built beginning this summer and the North Park expansion. Council Member Sullivan thanks the committee chair, Mickey Kahn, for inviting him to speak and allowing him to update his fellow chamber members and constituents.

#### Kingwood Executive Club Meeting

Council Member Sullivan addressed Kingwood Executive Club members last month during their weekly membership meeting held at the Kingwood Country Club. The council member gave a run down on current activities at city hall including water rate increases, Proposition 1 (also known as the rain tax), the budget deficit and current redistricting efforts.

#### **Project Updates**

- The design of the new Kingwood Community Center is complete. Bids were received January 13, and construction is scheduled to begin in June.
- The widening of North Park Drive construction is complete and is now open to the public.

#### South Belt – Ellington Town Hall Meeting

Council Member Sullivan will be hosting a town hall meeting in the South Belt-Ellington area Wednesday, May 11, 2011. The meeting will be held in the Marie Flickinger Building at San Jacinto College -South Campus from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. The campus is located at 13735 Beamer Rd.

Council Member Sullivan invites the residents in this area to come voice their concerns, needs and suggestions for the district at this town hall meeting. Council Member Sullivan believes that with the various issues council is tasked with this year, it is extremely important to him that he knows what is important to his constituents.

There will be an open microphone available for residents, after a few brief remarks by the Council Member. Representatives from the City of Houston's Public Works and Engineering Department, Solid Waste Department, Parks and Recreational Department, General Services Department, Houston Police Department and Houston Fire Department will also be available to answer questions specifically for the South Belt-Ellington area.

For more information, contact the Council Member's office at 832-393-3008, or by email <a href="mailto:districte@cityofhouston.net">districte@cityofhouston.net</a>.

## 451<sup>st</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion Meeting

Council Member Sullivan was the guest speaker at the 451<sup>st</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion meeting held on May 1 at the Crown Plaza Hotel. He spoke to 400 military men, women and their guests and expressed his unwavering support for their unparalleled courage and service to this country. He addressed how proud he is to have Ellington Field in his district and discussed the growth of the airport including ongoing military development. Most importantly, Council Member Sullivan was given the opportunity to say "thank you" to these brave men and women who often do not hear those words enough.

Council Member Sullivan thanks Michael W. Small, SSG, USAR for including him in the program and for giving him the opportunity to speak.

#### **Sagemont Community Center Groundbreaking**



Council Member Sullivan with South Belt – Ellington Chamber of Commerce members



Council Member Sullivan gives brief remarks before turning dirt on the new community center.



Employees from the Parks and Recreation and General Services Department as well as contractors with Council Member Sullivan

The City of Houston's Parks and Recreation and General Services Departments have begun construction on the new Sagemont Park Community Center located at 11507 Hughes Road. Council Member Sullivan hosted a groundbreaking ceremony on April 26 to celebrate the commencement of the construction. He was joined by several from the community including Marie Flickinger from the South Belt - Ellington Leader, Sally Mitchell with the South Belt - Ellington Chamber of Commerce, Tammie Nielsen representing State Representative Ken Legler, David Matthews representing Commissioner El Franco Lee's office and Officer Z. Guinn from Constable Gary Freeman's office. In addition, several chamber members, HPD Officer Randy Derr and fire fighters from station 70 attended the ceremony. Pastor Emory Gadd from Sagemont Church blessed the ground with a prayer.

This is a project that Council Member Sullivan has anticipated breaking ground on since being sworn in three years ago. He has continuously worked with the appropriate departments to ensure that the community will be positively impacted and benefit from its amenities.

Substantial completion is set for December 2011 with an opening date anticipated for early 2012.

#### **Southeast Water Purification Plant Tour**



Council Member Sullivan with the director, Dan Kreuger and employees from the city's Public Works and Engineering Department

As chair of the Water Resource Management Committee, Council Member Sullivan was given a tour of the newly expanded and improved Southeast Water Purification Plant (SEWPP) located off of Genoa Red Bluff. The water plant also lies in the southern part of District E and provides water to a large majority of Council Member Sullivan's constituents. The city's Public Works and Engineering Director, Dan Kreuger, as well as Atul Raj from Pepper – Lawson Construction also joined the council member on the tour which was given by PWE employees.

Council Member has a thorough background in water quality and is extremely knowledgeable about the resource. He has continued to be updated with the SEWPP expansion progress and is excited to have the new part of the plant up and running. He thanks Public Works and Engineering for giving him the intimate tour and for educating him on the inner workings of the plant.

#### Representative Ken Legler's Town Hall Meeting



Representative Ken Legler and Council Member Sullivan at San Jacinto College

State representative Ken Legler, District 144, hosted a town hall meeting at San Jacinto College – South Campus for his constituents while back in the district last month. He took the opportunity to give them an update on issues the state legislature is tackling during this legislative session and what has been accomplished so far. In particular, the representative spoke about balancing the states budget and redistricting.

Council Member Sullivan attended the representative's town hall meeting as he and Representative Legler share many of the same constituents in the southern part of District E. Council Member Sullivan is supportive of the work that Rep. Legler does and regularly works with him and his staff in the community.

#### **Project Updates**

- Ground has been broken for the new Sagemont Community Center. Substantial completion is scheduled for December 2011 with an anticipated opening date of early 2012.
- Sabo Road construction began in February.
- The installation of new ball field lights at Blackhawk Park began in February.
- City Council voted and approved the appropriation of \$4.595 million for paving and drainage improvements to Astoria Boulevard.

#### **SPACE Generator for HFD Station 71**



Council Member Sullivan in front of the new SPACE generator



Council Member Sullivan stands with city representatives who helped make the SPACE generators possible.



Council Member Sullivan speaks with Assistant Fire Chief Orlando Munoz and Chief Terry Garrison

Council Member Sullivan is proud to announce that one of the Solar Power Adaptive Container for Everyone (SPACE) emergency solar generators will be installed at HFD station #71 located at 15200 Space Center Blvd. These new generators, designed by U of H School of Architecture faculty and students, will provide mobile emergency power to service any number of small power consuming devices that may be needed during emergencies such as radios, outside security lights, communication equipment, portable refrigerators, battery chargers, electric wheelchairs and other medical equipment. The generators are the first of their kind and can also act as solar powered offices, service centers or storage when not being used during an emergency.

#### **Clear Lake Town Hall Meeting**



Council Member Sullivan gives brief remarks before handing over the floor to department representatives.



Council Member Sullivan and HFD Captain Michael Blevins



Council Member Sullivan speaks with a constituent following the town hall meeting.

Council Member Sullivan hosted his annual spring town hall meeting at the University of Houston – Clear Lake on April 11. Over 20 people attended and received updates about a variety of city related issues and District E project updates. Council Member Sullivan addressed his constituents about Proposition 1, the new drainage fee that will be implemented on July 1<sup>st</sup>, the city's budget deficit and gave a thorough explanation about the proposed redistricting maps that were recently released. In addition, city representatives gave updates about Capitol Improvement Projects scheduled or recently completed as well as other special projects and repairs that are to be done in the southern part of the district.

Council Member Sullivan thanks the University of Houston - Clear Lake for allowing his office to use their facility for his meeting and also thanks the city department representatives for attending and giving thorough presentations.

# Clear Lake Area Chamber of Commerce Crawfish Festival and Gumbo Cook-Off



Clear Lake Area Chamber of Commerce Chairman and Space Center Houston President Richard Allen and Council Member Sullivan

The Clear Lake Area Chamber of Commerce hosted its 16<sup>th</sup> annual Crawfish Festival April 1 and 2. Council Member Sullivan attended the festival with his wife and guests Dana and Tom Oxley. Over 2,500 people enjoyed an afternoon of crawfish, live entertainment, silent auctions and games. For the second year in a row, Council Member Sullivan sponsored an eater for the annual crawfish eating contest. Every year, two separate contests are held, one for adults and the other for kids. The winning eater receives a sponsored prize as well as bragging rights.

Council Member Sullivan has been a Chamber member for several years and is always impressed with and supportive of the many events they host for their members and the community. He is proud to have the chamber and its members in his district and commends Cindy Herrald for her outstanding leadership and her staff for all the work that they do.

#### Clear Lake Golf Course Club House Fire



HFD firefighters found the building completely ablaze when they reached the scene



Firefighter Matt Faulkner, Council Member Sullivan, firefighter Rudy Munoz, CLCCA Manager Leslie Alvarez Phillips and HFD District Chief Ken Tyner



Arson investigators promptly responded to the incident and were on scene to look into what could have started the fire.

The club house at the Clear Lake Golf Course burned down to the ground during the afternoon of April 7. Firefighters from five different fire stations responded to the call and laboriously worked to put out the flames for several hours. That evening, contractors arrived and completely demolished the building that has been such a concern to the community.

Since being sworn into office, Council Member Sullivan has received numerous complaints about the blight of the building and the public safety hazard it has been. He has worked with HPD's Clear Lake substation and Neighborhood Protection over the last couple of years to ensure that the building and property continued to be secured and maintained due to the close vicinity of a school, recreation center and residential properties. He is happy to see that the building has been torn down and that all of the remaining debris has since been removed from the area.

He thanks the Houston Fire Department and Neighborhood Protection for working with him to guarantee that the building was completely demolished and for their hard work that lasted late into the night.

#### **Grace Community Church Service**

Council Member Sullivan attended a Grace Community Church service on the morning of Sunday April 12. Pastor Steve Riggle extended a special invitation to the council member as he continued to fight and stand for exemptions for churches during the implementation discussions regarding Prop 1, the rain tax. Council Member Sullivan fought vigilantly for churches like Grace and believes that a tax on the churches would have been wrong and completely unreasonable. Council Member Sullivan and Houston churches won their fight when council passed exemptions for faith based institutions on April 6. The tax will be fully implemented on July 1, 2011.

Grace Community Church is host to the city's first responder funerals and is also located in District E.



#### Bay Area Republican Women's Club Meeting



Council Member Sullivan begins by giving a run down of city hall issues.



BARWC President Rae Sinor and Council Member Sullivan

The Bay Area Republican Women's Club invited Council Member Sullivan to speak at their monthly luncheon at Bay Oaks Country Club on Wednesday, April 27. Council Member Sullivan addressed the membership and gave them updates regarding the state of the city including the budget deficit, the implementation of Prop 1 and how it will affect Clear Lake residents, and redistricting. In addition, he highlighted the things that continue to be consistent in his district such as constituent services and his strong presence in the community as well as upcoming developments scheduled for the area. These developments include the expansion of Ellington Airport, the potential of Embry Riddle expanding their campus to Houston and a new solar panel generator scheduled to be assigned to Station 71 located at 15200 Space Center Blvd. Following his presentation, Council Member Sullivan opened the floor to BARWC members to give them an opportunity to ask him questions.

Council Member Sullivan appreciates the opportunity he was given to address his constituents and thanks BARWC president, Rae Sinor for including him in the program.

#### **CCISD Candidates Forum**

The Clear Creek Independent School District's Board of Trustees will hold a regular election for District 2 and District 4 seats in May. A candidates forum was held at the Clear Lake Area Chamber of Commerce in April. As a former school board member and the district council member whose area includes several CCISD campuses, Council Member Sullivan attended the forum to listen to the candidates' positions on important issues facing the school district. District 2 candidates Lisa Salinas and incumbent Win Weber and District 4 candidates Alan Benjamin and incumbent Page Rander discussed the top challenges facing the school district today.

#### **Project Updates**

- Sylvan Rodriguez Park is currently in the programming phase. Construction on lighting for two existing fields and parking is scheduled to begin fiscal year 2012.
- Ellington Airport has almost \$100 million in military construction now underway.
- City Council approved a \$70,000 contract for a comprehensive flood study at and around Ellington Airport.
- The Houston-Galveston Area Council Pedestrian Bicyclist Special District Study has begun. Public meetings are TBA.

#### **Houston Dynamo Game Honoring Late Kingwood Student**



Council Member Sullivan and Houston Dynamo President Chris Canetti presenting the Keevill family with a team jersey.



Council Member Sullivan, Major Sgt. Reuter and his wife

Late Kingwood High School soccer player and beloved son, Max Keevill was honored before a Houston Dynamo game on Friday, April 29 in front of thousands at Robertson Stadium. Keevill, an 11<sup>th</sup> grade soccer player for both Kingwood High School and Kingwood Alliance Soccer Club, was recently killed during a tragic car accident. He was a passionate Houston Dynamo fan and a talented player who left his mark on the field.

Council Member Sullivan partnered with the Houston Dynamo to present Keevill's family with a team-signed jersey before the game against D.C. United. In addition, a portion of the ticket's proceeds went to the Max Keevill Memorial Fund.

During halftime, Major Sgt. Craig Reuter of the Air Force serving out of Ellington Field was honored and recognized for his unparalleled courage, strength and dedication to the United States Air Force. Council Member Sullivan had the opportunity to personally thank Major Sgt. Reuter and thanks Dynamo President Chris Canetti for giving him the opportunity to nominate him to be recognized.

#### **Grand Opening of Houston Dynamo Training Fields**

The Houston Dynamo unveiled their new, first-class training Methodist Champions Field during a press conference on April 13 held at the Houston Amateur Sports Park. The new sports park will be home to the Dynamo's practice fields as well as a state-of-the-art rehabilitation sports center. Council Member Sullivan has been anticipating the opening of the fields and attended the press conference. He looks forward to having teams from Kingwood and Clear Lake, both heavily saturated with soccer players and Dynamo fans, use these new fields for practice and tournaments.

The City of Houston acquired the \$8.5 million, 95-acre property in 2008 after a comprehensive assessment indicated that the city needed youth and amateur sports facilities. The Houston Amateur Sports Park, a Houston Parks Board facility operated by the Dynamo, includes the Methodist Champions Field, one artificial turf field and five additional grass fields. It is scheduled to open for public use this spring and will play host to several sporting events including soccer, football, rugby, lacrosse and more.



The Houston Dynamo team practiced on the new Methodist fields during the press conference and unveiling.

#### **State of the City**

The Greater Houston Partnership hosted the annual State of the City meeting last month featuring Mayor Annise Parker at the Hilton Americas. Council Member Sullivan joined several of his colleagues and prominent Houston leaders at the meeting to hear the mayor discuss the economic health the City of Houston. She also highlighted future obstacles she and council face in the future ahead including the large budget deficit and redistricting.

#### **Parents of Murdered Children Ceremony**



Council Member Sullivan and a parent holding a picture of her murdered child

As part of Crime Victims Awareness Week, the Heights Parents of Murdered Children (POMC) held a candlelight vigil ceremony at Eleanor Tinsley Park honoring their loved ones lost through violence. Council Member Sullivan has attended the ceremony for consecutive years as well as other events hosted by POMC. He had the honor of addressing the parents and their families during this years ceremony and thanks the Heights POMC for allowing him to speak.

Andy Kahan, the Mayor's Crime Victims Director, also briefly spoke. Kahan has worked with the Houston Police Department for many years and has been a relentless advocate for victims and their families. Council Member Sullivan has worked with him on several occasions and is proud to have him serve the City of Houston.

### Village Republican Women's "Cheers to 50 Years"

The Village Republican Women celebrated their anniversary with a fundraiser themed "Cheers to 50 Years" held at the Junior League on April 11. The women, who are known for their loyal support for republican candidates and policies, invited the Honorable Bill Archer to be the guest speaker for the evening. In addition to former Congressman Archer, Congressman John Culberson was recognized for his commitment to strong republican principals.

Council Member Sullivan attended the event as did the Kingwood Area Republican Women's Club who were actively engaged in the celebration.

#### **North Houston Association Breakfast**

The North Houston Association's Environment Committee hosted a breakfast for his members and guests regarding Region H water issues. A panel consisting of Ted Long, NRG Energy; Marvin Marcell, Fort Bend Subsidence District; Ron Neighbors, Harris-Galveston Subsidence District; and Paul Nelson, North Harris County Regional Water Authority discussed and educated members about water quality for Region H. This region includes three river and four coastal basins in southeast Texas and spans across the Houston-Galveston Metropolitan area. It encompasses the San Jacinto River basin, the lower portions of the Trinity and Brazos River Basins and includes part or all of the Brazos-Colorado, the San Jacinto-Brazos, the Trinity – San Jacinto and the Neches – Trinity coastal basins.

As chair of the Water Resources Management Committee, Council Member Sullivan attended the breakfast and was recognized for his previous work with Region H and with the city's WRM Committee.

#### **Committee Update**

Ethics and Council Governance: As chair of the Ethics and Council Governance Committee, Council Member Sullivan held a special called committee meeting on April 6 to further discuss the City Council budget. Mayor Parker asked Council Member Sullivan to introduce this item in his committee in March in order to give the council members the opportunity to begin discussing their office budgets. He called for an additional meeting in April in order to make a recommendation to the administration regarding appropriate cuts city council, as a whole, would see fitting to take. In addition, Finance Director Kelly Dowe gave a brief presentation and stayed for questioning during the meeting. No further action was taken.

For more information, please contact Council Member Sullivan's office at (832) 393.3008.

#### **Hurricane Town Hall Meeting**

Council Member Sullivan would like you to mark your calendar for his upcoming Hurricane Preparedness Town Hall Meeting. Please save the date to learn more about what you and yoru family can do to prepare for this year's hurricane season, which begins June 1. Representatives from the Office of Emergency Management, Solid Waste Management Department, Houston Police Department and the Houston Fire Department will be in attendance to present information about preventative measures one can take, evacuation, how to stay updated during a hurricane and post clean up steps.

June 8 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. University of Houston – Clear Lake

Garden Room

2700 Bay Area Boulevard

For more information, please contact Karina Moreno at (832) 393.3008.

#### **Heavy Trash**

Council Member Sullivan would like to remind District E residents that the City of Houston's Solid Waste Management Department will only pick up Tree Waste during the month of May. Tree Waste is defined as "clean" wood such as tree limbs, branches and stumps. Lumber, furniture and treated wood will NOT be accepted. For more information please visit the Solid Waste Management Department's website at www.houstonsolidwaste.org.

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